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TEMPERANCE ESSAYS.

No. I.

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ON THE DUTIES

OF THE

INFLUENTIAL CLASSES

TO THE

TEMPERANCE REFORM.

BY GEORGE F. NOYES.

BOSTON:
WHITE & POTTER, PRINTERS.
1846.

GOVERNMENT

OF THE

Massachusetts Temperance Society.

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June 9. 1878.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The Council of the Massachusetts Temperance Society have, by the munificence of the late John Parker, Esq., come into possession of four thousand dollars, of which they have made a permanent investment. The Council have for the present appropriated the interest of this fund to Prizes for Temperance Essays, and the following is the first which has received the Prize. In order to extend their operations, and so to promote the benevolent designs of the Society, the Council solicit such additions to the present funds, by legacies and by donations, as will enable them to address the community in every suitable way, and to press the claims of Temperance upon all.

The Council beg leave to solicit original Tracts, and Essays, from those who take an interest in the reform, but who may not care to become competitors for a prize. They believe that there are many such amongst us, who in this way may do great good.

Prize Essay, No. II.

The Council of the Massachusetts Temperance Society offer a premium of thirty dollars for the best Essay on the following subject:

On the Influence of the Importation of, the Manufacture, and the Traffic in Intoxicating Drinks, (or the power of Character and Capital in these regards,) in obstructing the progress of the Temperance Reform, and in corrupting the Public Morals.

Each Essay is to have a motto, which motto shall be written upon a *sealed packet* which shall have within it the writer's name. Essays are to be addressed to the Secretary within four months from this date, and none will be received after that time. Essays not sent for within six months after the prize is awarded, will be held as the property of the society.

WALTER CHANNING, Secretary.

Boston, Nov. 10, 1846.

ESSAY.

"GREY is all theory, and green the tree of practice," says Thomas Carlyle, and the present is an age fully illustrative of his truth. It is an age of the substitution of practical reform for the Utopian theories of the past. Philosophy, so long a wanderer in an ideal world, or brooding over visionary schemes of improvement, has left her unreal vagaries, and descended to gladden this earth. Practical systems, emanating from the actual wants of humanity, have usurped the places of alchemy and black letter: earnest philanthropists, looking deeply into the *true* and the *real*, have dethroned the dreaming visionary and the subtle scholiast. Reform is not now a scheme founded upon cloudy speculation, the creature of priestcraft or sophistry, the bugbear of mystified ignorance, brought into existence from the smoky study or amid the dust and mould of books; but a clear-headed, strong-handed genius, springing up from the foam and whirl of active every-day existence, quick to discern and to alleviate the evils of society. Gradually clearing away prejudices, evolving new and important truths, and accustoming the popular vision to her bright beamings, she is the personification of the grandeur

of human progress. This active age of ours, while it yields to the past all due credit, steadfastly opposes a narrow-minded conservatism, and claims pre-eminence for its practical benevolences, for the mighty efforts of its big souls to elevate and improve the many.

Pre-eminent among the components of this great scheme of reform, is that which has for its object the freeing of human nature from frightful bondage to an appetite. Comparatively few years have elapsed since this rapidly increasing slavery became apparent, and from the absolute necessity of a change, resulted the Temperance Reform. Originating in the convictions and self-denial of a few minds, gradually spreading its illuminative beams, it has passed through the successive phases of moderate drinking, total abstinence, and Washingtonianism, until a glad thrill of the half-palsied heart of a nation, attested its mighty results.

And yet it cannot be denied that there is an agency at work, which checks the progress of this reform, and affords a truce to the earth-fiend of the still. Manfully have the friends of Temperance continued their efforts, but even the most sanguine are conscious of a clog retarding this work of practical usefulness; and, after earnest investigation of the causes of this retardation, we charge, as the great obstacle of this reform—*the non-performance of their duties by the influential classes.*

All men are created equal, and unto all is given a portion of influence. It is also true that there are

circumstances entering into the social relations, essentially modifying this natural equality of influence, and giving to the few the predominance over the many. It has seemed best to our Creator that the diversity of series, which, in the animal creation rises from the polype to the perfect man, should enter in some degree into the scale of society. And upon those favored by circumstances with this paramount influence, the Temperance Reform calls most powerfully; for this is, from its very nature, an universal scheme, demanding the co-operation of the race. It is not the offspring of a school or opinion, but an effort for the uplifting of a world, addressing all classes and nations of men; pointing backward to wretched slavery, and forward to happy freedom. Unto every individual man this cause addresses itself, not with the weakness of human language but with the strength of an almost inspired agent of omnipotence. Every influence is invoked in its aid, whether it emanate from the prince or the beggar. To him especially who is favored above his fellows, belongs a higher duty; and it will be the office of this essay, by pointing out the sources of influence, and the duties consequent thereon, and by the presentation of other and more general considerations, to urge the performance of this duty upon the influential classes.

Prominent among the sources of influence is Wealth. And such must ever be the case, while the present structure of society exists. Its mere possession gives the owner a commanding influence, inasmuch as he is the visible personification of that principle, for

which the great mass of mankind are constantly striving, and toward which all their efforts and desires are directed. It also affords to the aggregate of mankind the only solution of that main problem of life—where can we procure sufficient to eat, drink and wear? However much we may talk about the innate sublimity of human nature, the great end of their endeavors is, with a large majority, the solution of this problem. By arousing enterprise, by rewarding labor and encouraging effort, wealth forms the great balance-wheel of the social system, and thus governs much of its movements. From such influences the Temperance Reform demands, in the first place, that wealth furnish a good *example.* Powerful as is the example of every man upon his fellows, that of wealth is especially so, coupled as it is with a direct influence over those in any degree dependent upon it, or striving for it themselves. The principle of imitation, growing with our growth, needs no such aid to make it a governing principle, and sadly does it act, when it thus perpetuates an evil custom. Far more happily is it exerted, when, by the yielding up a little of self-indulgence, it directs the sympathies of its followers into another channel. Therefore do we call upon wealth to dash away the wine-cup, and present a good example on this point to the world.

Again, it is the duty of wealth to afford a portion of its possessions to the assistance and support of this Reform. It requires continuous action to overcome the inertia of any moral scheme, to conquer the sluggish tendencies of society toward conservatism, and

keep any such subject alive in the public mind. Wealth can do this, can conquer all obstacles of this kind by the dissemination of Temperance publications and by the employment of lecturers, and thus can exercise a portion of its benevolence in favor of this reform.

And yet this giving of pecuniary aid is of trifling importance when compared to other influences which it might be the high privilege of wealth to exert. By its open discountenancing this vice, by its quiet though powerful moral supervision over the labor it employs, far more could be accomplished than by any donations. It is too true that the time has not yet come, when any permanent reform can be brought about, without appealing in some degree to the self-interests of the individual. The abstract principles of right, however much they may be discussed, are too frequently ineffectual, unless assisted by other and more earthly considerations. And these considerations can be brought to bear more especially by wealth. No one can complain of the unwillingness of the rich to aid in works of public enterprise, or contribute to the schemes of benevolence. But this is a duty of another character. We ask that in the employment of labor and in the transactions of business, some distinction may be made between the temperate and the intemperate—that the moral as well as the manual or mental qualities be looked after—that the idea be promulged that there is a difference in this respect. Men will ever be found open to advice, coupled like this with their business prospects; and thousands, who have been careless on this point, will

recognize its importance, and give up the half-acquired habit. It cannot be expected that men will sacrifice their business to their efforts in any such scheme, but the method we propose demands but little trouble, and will amply reward those who try it. For there *is* a difference between the trembling hand and the fevered brain of the drinker, and the strong nerve and cool head of the temperate man, and it is for the present interest of the men of wealth to recognize this difference. And what a vast amount of good could thus be exerted, particularly upon the young! For business must take its tone from its leaders, and it should be silently proclaimed by their example, and by their moral supervision, that among good business qualities, temperance is essential. If it be known that this virtue is a pre-requisite of success, and the countenance of men of wealth be withdrawn from those persisting in the opposite habit, very few would be found unwilling to give up this abuse of appetite, and thus very much could be effected for this Reform.

Another of the great sources of social influence is Education. Knowledge, though perhaps inferior in its direct and visible influences to wealth, ever brings with it a power over the race; the one being a superiority of worldly, the other of intellectual possessions.

He who, by his researches into the laws of the natural or moral world, and by the diligent cultivation of his mental powers, can best satisfy those intellectual longings which arise in every curious mind, must necessarily wield an influence over his fellows.

And it is by education that the might and majesty of individual minds are developed—of minds which give a direction to popular thought, a soul to popular opinion. Thus awakens Genius, that divine afflatus annihilating space and time, speaking to us from bygone centuries with an eloquence undiminished by the lapse of ages. Ever-attractive, whether in its illustrations of good or ill, it carries captive the heart, and comes to humanity with spells of mighty power. And very often has genius been a curse to the world, from its recommendatory and fascinating encomiums of the sin of intemperance. Blinded by its sympathy with the great souls of other days, it has followed them in their biddings of evil as well as of good. Around the wine-cup have been thrown by a Homer and a Horace the laureled wreaths of poesy, and the gifted ones of the present day have not yet dared to pluck them off and disclose the deadliness lurking within. With all their most fascinating influences, they have aided in consecrating this habit, and binding down inspiration in abject dependence upon an appetite, and it is their bounden duty now to cast off their allegiance to a liquor, which in our times emanates from the druggery rather than Phalernia, and to present to the world a far different example; for intemperance has been so much the theme of the praises and laudations of genius, that the young enthusiast is taught to look upon it as an almost necessary accompaniment. Coming into the world, he looks along the lengthening line of the men of genius, and yielding to the spell and example of their great

names, he also adds another to the list of the intemperate. Every encouraging allusion to this habit should be avoided, for joined with each is a fascination of intellect almost irresistible. Thus is promulgated the idea that genius exempts its possessor from the rules of morality—thus are mingled all the elements of delight with the Circean cup of poison. Thus through all time has intemperance found its most efficient agents in the works of intellectual heroes, and thousands upon thousands of the young and the gifted have laid down their wasted talents and wretched bodies in the grave, in obedience to the recommendation of wisdom and of genius. And full time is it that such recommendations should cease. Full time is it that the sons of genius of the present day should dissolve their allegiance to this custom of less enlightened ages, and not forgetting meet reverence to the master spirits of the Past, no longer lag behind in the march of reform. Not only should they cease cursing society with their baleful example, but they should come out manfully and advocate the great principles of Temperance. Is there naught of inspiration or poesy in the crystal water as it bubbles forth from the glad earth; or is it all confined to the concoctions of drugs, and the foul distillations of vegetable corruption? If the latter be the case, away with all inspiration! If not, let genius throw off *such* aids, and recognize and perform its duties in this great work.

And unto the less godlike gift of Talent also belongs a duty to this reform. In most respects, in its investigations after truth, in its workings upon the popular

mind, and in its active agency in human progress, talent is performing well its mission. Working with determined energy in the pursuit of knowledge, engaging heart and hand in many other schemes for the amelioration of humanity, or crowding the ranks of the learned professions, its sons are exercising an all-pervading influence. But how few of their efforts are directed to the furtherance of this Temperance reform, one of the greatest schemes of philanthropy ever devised!

How few of the gifted seem willing to lend their assistance to this great practical movement, while they are by no means backward in others of larger-sounding titles, but far less importance to the race. We would not ask a cessation of theoretic inquiries; we believe that it is only thus that essential truths can be evolved; but we demand of talent a portion of its influence for this reform. Men of talent have ever been too careless and unwilling to recognize their duties to society in this matter, or perhaps considering them of minor importance. But is it a small matter, that they are standing directly in the way of the vast multitude who follow their example, look to them for advice, and admire their other virtues, and who are thus directly influenced to continue a habit they might otherwise escape? Is it a small matter that thus intemperance is made the unfailing accompaniment of all talent? Surely there can be no nobler incitement than this which has for its object the emancipation of a race from the embrace of a hydra-headed

monster, which has so long paralized its energies, and enfeebled its efforts. Founded upon palpable facts, proving its inherent excellence by actual, visible results, this reform offers a fit arena for the broadest philanthropy, and the greatest intellectual efforts. Almost might we say to the talented, if the devotion of a portion of your powers will prevent other investigations, it is still your duty to leave these theories and speculations, and for the present to devote yourselves *wholly* to this reform. Honor to you for your benefactions and inventions; but *now*, stop here, and see if by your efforts you may not lift from humanity the spell of destroying alcohol. For thus alone, when you have freed our nature from the bondage of appetite, can your other investigations have their due effect. It is only upon cool heads that these have their best influence, and it is yours, by the gifts of heaven to you, to afford this opportunity of intelligence to a half-palsied world. Thus also will you call to your aid a vast host of men of talents; who now, through your influence or carelessness, are degraded and sunk under a habit.

Do you object that efforts to promote temperance are sometimes made by the illiterate? It is because you are unmindful of your privileges, and unwilling to relieve them of duties they would gladly resign to you. Come forth, then, from your indifference on this point, and make this reform consecrate by all the might and majesty of intellect.

The third source of influence we would mention, entering into the very elements of society and assert-

ing its power over every part of it, is Fashion. As wealth directs the labor and enterprise, and talent the opinions, so fashion is the arbiter of taste, the model of etiquette and custom; and all are, in a greater or less degree, obedient to its dictates, and unwilling to appear ignorant of, or disobedient to, its mandates. He who enters within the circles of fashion, is bound by its laws, and nothing but some stronger passion, as avarice or ambition, or a deep sense of right, can make him independent of them. Every custom established by fashion addresses itself, especially, to young men, with a power which the strong and determined will can scarcely resist, for amid the brilliancy of hospitality and the bright smiles of woman, it is urged upon him. Nor is the influence of fashion confined to any particular sphere. Directly or indirectly, its power asserts itself over every class of society. Implanted in human nature is the principle of imitation; and, rank by rank, it every day developes itself in the community, causing men to follow those who are the acknowledged moulders of custom. Upon the leaders of fashion, then, devolves a duty to the temperance reform—solemn and unequivocal, and not to be denied or avoided; for it is their influence which mainly checks the onward progress of this cause. Right in its course, the fashionable custom of wine-drinking raises itself, an almost insuperable barrier to any such advance. Through all society, this sanction of moderate drinking exerts its power; and none are so low as to be wholly free from it. As long as this is con-

sidered the necessary acompaniment of socialness, so long will it be utterly impossible to purge away the deadly evils of intemperance. Even if the custom were confined to their homes, it would still be their duty to cease from it wholly. But when we see it giving its sanction to the vast mass of venders as well as drinkers—initiating thousands of young men into this enslaving habit, and then sending them forth to tenant the jails, the insane asylums, and graveyards; frowning upon all mention of reforms, and indirectly lending its name and authority to the persistence in this sin, the absolute necessity of a change appeals to us even more powerfully. It is most clearly the duty of fashion, in view of these considerations, to yield a little of self-indulgence and prejudice, to banish this source of sorrow, to deny admission to its devotees. We need not ask it to expel the drunkard, for that it will always do; but to refuse its example and encouragement to the moderate drinker, the incipient drunkard, the worst enemy to this reform. We ask it to repudiate the idea that men and women must quaff the poisonous liquid, in order to be *genteel.*

Again, it is the duty of fashion, not only to remove the obstruction of an evil example, but also to give to this reform its countenance and support—to come out from its exclusive apathy, and by an occasional attendance upon the lectures and other temperance meetings, to direct the tastes of its numerous followers into this channel. Very many who now imitate the fashionable in their absence, would equally imi-

tate them in their attendance; and thus a celebrity woold be given to such meetings, without which, in the present state of society, they are ineffectual in a great degree. Thus only can fashion remove from intemperance the direct support it is now giving it—thus only can it cease to be the apologist of vice, and become the benefactor rather than the source of injury to society. And surely, this is but little to ask of it. Men cannot object that this movement will lessen their social dignity, for they are by no means required to give up their peculiar associates; and surely by their continuance in this custom they make common cause with the most wretched portion of the community. Every man has a right to select his own intimates; the structure of society forbids a general amalgamation; and yet, by taking a proper stand in this matter, they will become more respected, and possess a far more real superiority and pre-eminence.

Finally, in our mention of the sources of influence, would we name Religion. And here, at first view, it would seem unnecessary to say aught, for temperance is one of the very elements of religion, and one of its necessary constituents. And yet, the ministers and followers of Christ are not wholly free from the influence of circumstances; they have not wholly risen superior to those earthly considerations which act upon weak human nature. But upon this point there should be but one mind. If there is any influence unto which this temperance reform should look with perfect confidence for support, it is that of religion.

At whatever sacrifice of personal popularity, at whatever yielding up of present luxury, it is the duty of its professors and teachers to leave no reasonable means untried to help on this reform; for religion and intemperance are opposing principles, and the one can only succeed by the destruction of the other. Let it not be said that this is a minor or extraneous duty—an illegitimate deviation; for no one can deny that it is the very primary step in the advance of christianity. To argue on this point, and show their intimate connection, is rendered wholly unnecessary. If, then, there be any professor of religion, who by his silence or example is assisting in the progress of the sin of intemperance, to him this reform comes with an earnest prayer, that he may look into his heart, read his duty there, and then quietly but earnestly and with no cowardly spirit, go and do it. For if the pulpit or the church give its negative sanction to this vice, vain are the efforts of others in its extermination.

Such, then, are some of the chief elements, constituting the pre-eminence of the influential classes, with a few of the duties consequent thereon. Secondary to these are many others, but the principal have been sufficiently detailed. Nor have we enumerated all their various duties, for in the breast of every man is a monitor, speaking far more powerfully than can any human language. Wherever, from position, personal popularity, or any other circumstances, there results aught of influence, there exists a solemn duty to use a portion of it in furtherance of this reform.

I. The influential classes owe the performance of these duties to *themselves*. For no man, be he of high or low estate, can practice or encourage drinking, however moderately, without being in danger of becoming a drunkard. We have heretofore spoken chiefly of their influence upon others; but it is too fearfully evident that they themselves are not exempt from the curse they so strongly assist in perpetuating. Unto them is there no special privilege granted that they may indulge in temptation and in no manner be injured thereby. On the contrary, experience assures us that, in very many instances, the high and the influential have sipped too often the social bowl, and sunk to utter degradation. And why should not this be the case? Have not they the same appetites as their fellow beings? are not their opportunities of indulgence far better? does not the same rule of cause and effect govern all men? They also must find poison and death in the wine-cup; and life, from intemperance, must be alike to them a scene of ruined health, wasted talents, degradation, perhaps insanity. In sorrowful silence their fall is concealed by their friends, but if the whole truth were known, the picture of woe would embrace a member of almost every family. Many a son has caused the agony of a father, who was too well convinced that he alone was to blame. For, from the infancy of the boy, he was accustomed to consider wine-drinking as a necessary accomplishment; upon going forth into society, the intoxicating cup was given him with the sanction—almost *recommendation*, of his parent. From a natu-

ral and implanted prejudice, from a constant leaning upon and looking up to his father, the son's mind imperceptibly takes the tinge of his opinions and feelings, and may be moulded by him in almost any manner: too soon, then, does he obey this virtual command to go forth and be a drunkard—too soon he needs no teacher in this point of etiquette, and scorns the efforts of those who would win him from his infatuation. And hence arises this most solemn duty of giving to their children, the representatives of themselves, far different passports into life—of allowing the light of reform to have access to their hearts, ere they become wholly hardened and incorrigible.

II. The influential classes owe the performance of these duties to *society*. For, in the first place, they have no *right* to injure their fellow-citizens by a persistence in this custom. It would be useless at this time to go into an argument upon the benefits resulting from our social connections, or upon the abstract question as to how much of his natural rights were given up by the individual, in order to secure such benefits. Sufficient to state the truism that upon his entry into society, or continuance in it, every individual virtually contracts, in consideration of the protection given to his person and property, to abstain from injuring the body politic, and to give it his support. Such duties are not and cannot all be laid down in the statute-book; yet, though less specific, they are as fully implied and equally binding as positive laws. However much men may neglect such an obligation,

it ever exists, though it cannot be legally enforced. Part and parcel of it is the demand of the temperance reform to cease from further injury—to be no longer an obstacle to this scheme for the elevation of society. That her demand is founded upon truth, no one who has looked into the history of temperance movements can fail to perceive. Every one will remember with what a full tide of enthusiastic success, the Washingtonian principles spread through this country. But upon a large majority of those called the influential classes, these principles did not act; coldly and unsympathizingly they held themselves aloof from any participation. Now, in such an effort as this, nothing causes so much discouragement as the withdrawal of the countenance of any portion of the community. The temperance movement is essentially one of mutual encouragement and assistance; and, like religion, requires for its promotion the temporary forgetfulness of all social ranks and divisions. At such a time, when the strong electric current of sympathy and endeavor is broken by the secession of any class, the warmth and zeal of effort is checked, and coldness and apathy ensue. The erring ones, however softened by contrition and ready to forsake the enslaving custom, when they see the number who hang back, and look with cold indifference or scorn upon the cause, are discouraged from continuing their efforts for reform. The more hardened, who from very shame might have yielded, are encouraged by this secession to persist in their evil courses. Particularly is this the case when this disconnecting class is promi-

nent; for the more respectable a man is in other respects, the more frequently is his name cited and his example noticed. Thus, perhaps, without intending it, the influential moderate drinker not only refuses his own name, but prevents many others from the performance of right.

Again, the influential moderate drinkers constantly keep alive in society a custom which, but for them, would in a great measure cease, and die like many other kindred habits of darker times; for we cannot believe that there is sufficient of fascination in the drinking of the drugged and dirty concoctions of the bar-room and groggery, to offer much temptation to the inexperienced youth. With principles not fully developed, will not firmly established, he comes forth and mingles in the crowd. At first view, such scenes of dissipation, accompanied as they usually are by vulgar exhibitions of the most repulsive qualities of humanity, shock the natural feelings, and do not greatly charm the mind. But in a far more potent manner the temptation presents itself. He could easily withstand the merely animal appetite, but the custom of society is quoted to him; he looks into the world of literature, and finds drinking recommended as the very source of good-fellowship, and the first glass is wreathed for him with the smiles of the fair, or the almost equally powerful gushings forth of friendship and sociality. Initiated into the vile habit, step by step he descends the scale, until he becomes a constant visitant of the haunts he once abhorred, and he falls a victim to the example of the influential

classes. This is no uncommon case; it is thus that the list of the drunkards is kept full, and hence we say that no one has a right to injure society by his evil example or influence.

A second clause in the social engagement we have adverted to, is the obligation to support this movement and give it aid and influence, because thus men are doing *their part in aid of society.* And the greater the benefits arising from society, the greater are the consequent obligations. Wealth, fashion, talent, religion, owe their development (almost their existence) to this social protection; and hence their more powerful duties. True, the man of wealth has obtained it by his own skill and fortune; the man of talent owes his success to his own mind; the fashionable world became so from circumstances, perhaps, of its own creating. But be it remembered that in a disorganized and anarchical state of association, no opportunity for such acquisitions would be offered. Amid the confusions of bad government, such sources of influence yield to the overshadowing power of brute strength, or military tact. Unto society, then, are men under an obligation which they can only discharge by reciprocal endeavors. And if they would long enjoy these privileges, they *must* come forward and assist in this temperance reform. For it is only by the suppression of this great social evil, this disorganizing element which enters into the popular head and arouses riots and mobs, that any security can be given to the body politic. The riots and excitements attendant upon our elections, and jeopard-

izing the purity of the ballot-box, are mainly owing to intemperance. Men are not naturally fond of confusion and tumult, and require a stimulus before their usual good will for each other can be conquered. And it behooves the influential classes to look about them, and prevent the too powerful working of these influences of disorganization. Fair as everything at present seems, and much as we may praise our country, it requires the protection of every good principle to insure its future and permanent security. In the prosecution of this experiment of self-government, in the example she affords to the world, America calls upon every citizen to lend his aid in removing from her this fearful element of destruction. For ours is a government vested in the people, directly dependent upon popular opinion, and it requires that this opinion be cool and healthy, if we would have this delicate affair of government well administered. Hence we say to all men of influence, if ye would transmit your privileges securely to your children, you must not refuse to aid and assist society in this reform.

III. The performance of these duties we owe to our God. Thus alone can men fulfil the main objects of their creation, and well perform their part in the great scheme of Omnipotence. This scheme is of a two-fold nature, involving, firstly, the progressive advance of human nature; and, secondly, the preparation for a future and higher state of being. To do his assigned part in each, is the privilege and duty of every man. From the creation up to the present

time, step by step, sometimes checked by the opposing forces of superstition and ignorance, at times buried beneath a cloud of formal shams and priestcraft, or sunk in the sluggish slough of apathy, painfully and gradually, human civilization has ever moved slowly onward. Thus must it ever be, but it is in the power of each generation to accelerate or retard its course. Upon every age and nation, and upon every individual member of a nation, is devolved the duty of helping on the car of progress. They especially who wield the largest influence are called upon for the greatest aid. The Scriptural motto, "unto whom much is given, from him much shall be required," is, in its deepest sense, appropriate to this subject. And in no better way can it be fulfilled than by assisting a scheme which clears the head, gladdens the heart, and warms the feelings of humanity, thus opening the universal mind for the reception and proper appreciation of new and advanced truths. With all our fancied superiority over antiquity, very much of improvement is yet needed, very much of human agony might yet be spared. Unto us the Past comes with its vast experiences and instructions, and the Future demands the improvement of them. Though no command from Heaven may be stamped upon tablets of stone, yet the reasonableness and truth of this obligation to help on every good word and work, is evident to every true soul, and consciousness attests the authority. Many of ancient prejudices and ignorances have vanished before the light of civilization, still we are bound down to a habit as pernicious as the worst

of them. In our inability to imitate the Past, even in this vice, we guzzle noxious mixtures, and call them the wines of inspiration. Away with all talk about progress, until intemperance shall flee an age to which she does not lawfully belong! Let other ages point to their achievements in arts or in arms; be it the crowning glory of this century, that it purged from earth this universal poison! This is just *the work* for our age, a most practical and at the same time sublime work, worthy its highest efforts and noblest endeavors. And nobly can this work be accomplished, if the influential classes will but recognize their obligations and perform them—will but harken to the voices of the Past, the Present, and the Future, calling on them to lead on in the progressive march of humanity.

And immediately connected with this part of our duty to God, is that of preparation for a higher state of being. Were this earth the theatre of our whole existence, were death the end of our being, even then it would devolve upon all to aid and assist in every true means for the attainment of present happiness to the community. Even then, we should struggle to oust an evil, through which, sin, agony and death are largely increased, and which is the cause of so many tears. But when the truth is that this earth is the mere preparation for an eternity, how do present considerations merge themselves in this great responsibility—how do earthly influences seem only intended to produce these results. The brief journey of three score years and ten would seem far too short to allow

man to fulfil the obligations due to his God, by assisting his fellow-men in their efforts, by encouraging their endeavors, by correcting their failings, in a word, by assisting and being assisted in the preparation for heaven. But such is not yet the state of society. Poor human nature has never yet arrived at such a stage of advance. But thank God, men have, in this temperance reform, an opportunity to assist each other in a great degree in this preparation. By engaging in this great work, by cheering this purifier of society, by the power of a good example, much, very much, may even now be accomplished. Thus may the men of influence fulfil, in part, their obligations to their God, and lend their aid to the grand scheme of creative providence.

Again, the influential classes owe these duties to God, because it is only by their performance that they can develope those social virtues, to illustrate which these means of influence were given them. When, in our every-day observations of society, we mark the vast differences in rank and condition, the broad gulf between lordly wealth and abject poverty, the splendor of fortune, the squalid beggary of misfortune, we are oppressed with the painful doubt as to the causes of this difference, and our belief in the natural equality of men in the sight of God is somewhat shaken. And it is only in view of the great plan of the creation, that this doubt is somewhat removed, and we see why the few are thus distinguished above the many. This inequality of circumstances is necessary, for thus alone can those noble

traits of character whose development is owing to such inequality, as charity and benevolence, be called forth. Were we all upon an equal social level, no opportunity for the display of these and kindred virtues would be afforded; and a cold, blank selfishness would settle upon society. If there were no poverty, charity would slumber; if there were no misery, there would be no call for sympathy. In this our world, there are abundant opportunities for their calling forth, and hence we say that every possessor of influence must not refuse to practice and exemplify them. Unto him is given the illustration of some of the most heaven-like qualities of earth, and he *must* leave his selfishness, which is the very opposite of these, and prove the existence of these good qualities in our nature. And in no way can he better do this than in assisting this temperance reform,—a reform having its very origin in these noble virtues, and calling them constantly forth, as good examples to the race.

Thus, then, have we given some of the considerations with which the Temperance reform now addresses the influential classes, and defines their obligations to themselves, to society, and to God. And they must force upon every candid mind the conviction, that all are bound to yield a little of appetite or prejudice, to relinquish this custom of other and darker ages, and come forward with manly independence in support of this great cause. We are well aware that it is very hard to throw off the influences of custom, and that it requires moral courage to act

in opposition to the rules of etiquette as prescribed by our fellows. But for this very reason should this duty be performed with a more earnest readiness. Be it remembered that the influential man is one of the makers of custom, and if it be hard for *him* to loose its bonds, how almost impossible must it be for the *young*, the future constituents of society. Does he object to bind himself by a pledge? We acknowledge that it is with regret at its necessity we answer his objection. But for the great and universal prevalence of an actual vice, such a pledge would not be needed. The great heart of humanity is half palsied by intemperance—a diseased appetite is governing the community; and it is therefore necessary to take such a measure to oppose this destroying principle, and produce a reformation. Our fathers found such a pledge of mutual assistance and sympathy powerful to assist them in the wars of the revolution; we find it equally needed in the movement of temperance. We acknowledge then our regret that a pledge is necessary; we firmly believe that the day will come when a more healthy tone of society will not require it; but until then, we ask of every man his name, for thus alone can his influence be properly appreciated. And surely there is far more of manliness in the public renunciation of wrong—in the contempt of the opinions of others—in the noble yielding up of prejudice, than in this constant grovelling at the feet of slavish custom. It is, we acknowledge, no trifling duty that we ask of the influential classes; but it *is* a duty, and they have as examples many who have nobly per-

formed it. No one will now urge the idea that with them, moderate drinking is a matter of peculiar privilege, a symbol of aristocracy. To disprove this, we need only ask them to look around upon the community, and see *where* and by *whom*, this *privilege* is mainly exercised. In the lowest haunts of iniquity, in miserable groggeries, by the degraded and the vile is this *peculiar* custom practiced in its fullest extent. The bleared eye and the disfigured countenance are as frequent accompaniments of this vice, as the polite pledge or the bright smile of woman; the wrecked intellect, the idiotic laugh, are more common than "the feast of reason, and the flow of soul" originating in any inspiration from wine. Thus is any such idea of aristocratic privilege fully answered.

But the objection with some may be, not that the sacrifice is too great, but that it is a minor, trifling matter, not demanding any peculiar efforts on their part. In any great, exciting movement, they are willing and ready to do their whole duty, but in this reform the temperance societies can do all that is necessary, and they are therefore easy as to their individual responsibility. Unto such we may quote a few statistics to show whether this matter be one of indifference, and how much yet remains to be done. In a recent temperance publication, we read that "Facts justify the conclusion that alcohol has, within the last thirty years, ushered more than a million of souls, uncalled, and in violation of the command, 'thou shalt not kill,' into the presence of their Maker. Its annual victims in the United States are estimated at 30,000."

Again, as a cause of crime, "of 643 who were committed to the House of Correction in Boston, in one year, 453 were drunkards." As a cause of insanity, Dr. Woodward says that "Intemperance still takes first rank among the causes of insanity." But why quote estimates, when every where in this our world are all-powerful arguments which must convince every moderate drinker that he is guilty of no trifling sin, when thus aiding and abetting this curse of Intemperance? Up from the thirty thousand graves annually dug for the drunkards of this country, there comes a voice telling him that he is one of the makers of a custom, in obedience to which those graves are tenanted. Let him mark the agony of one victim, the wretchedness of one family, ruined by intemperance, and he will need no arguments to satisfy him that this is no trifling matter. Does he think that his private actions are of little consequence? Let him remember that it is only by individual secessions from the ranks of moderate drinking, that anything can be effected. No sudden and universal change in this respect will ever instantaneously take place;—one by one, men must come forward, and gradually will the happy reformation be consummated. And now is the very time for such individual secessions. By the strong influence of the Washingtonian movement, a check was given to this evil. But this check was but temporary, and gradually the seeds of appetite are being sown broad-cast as before, especially among the young. It is proved by actual statistics that this vice is rapidly increasing among us—that the temperance

cause is undoubtedly retrograding. Sadly have the friends of this reform remarked this fact, and yet they are not wholly discouraged. They have faith to believe, that when the influential classes shall perceive that they are the chief causes of this retrogression, they will recognize their duties, and remove the present obstacles. They ask of them but to listen to that mentor which tenants the bosom of every high-minded man, and there are no fears but that they will be found working manfully in this great scheme of temperance. And from their participation in this movement will arise a freshness and sympathy of feeling which will re-act upon their natures, and make them happier and better men. No man can isolate himself from his race in any such reform, without engendering a selfishness which is the parent of many kindred evils. The glad pulsations of the universal heart are a mockery to him, and he loses in misanthropy the purest and highest pleasures of existence; for *self* is not the grand object of our creation, and he who believes and practices such a doctrine, perverts his better nature, and must suffer the evil consequences of such a perversion. The great question which will present itself at the end of life, is not "how hast thou pampered and indulged self?" but, "how much, in the midst of thy enjoyments, hast thou done to benefit thy fellow-men?" Happy, thrice happy he, who can answer this question with the consciousness that he has not failed in his duty. If men would but believe this—if the influential would only *try* the happiness of doing good,

how much of misery might be spared themselves and others—how many tears might cease to flow! And we look forward into the future with fervent hopes, that by their co-operation in this reform, a portion of these good results may yet be effected by the influential classes of the community. For thus alone can the discords of earth be calmed, thus alone can it cease its jarring strains, and chime in harmoniously with the thanksgiving-chorus of its sister spheres.